

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

**A STUDY OF TURKISH OFFICERS AT THE NAVAL  
POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL: SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

by

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June 1999

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This thesis is a study of the Turkish officers at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The study examines the Turkish officer experiences before and during their postgraduate education at NPS. Focused interviews were conducted with 20 Turkish officers. All interviews were taped and then transcribed. Analysis of the transcripts revealed ten critical themes. These themes covered many topics, including problems related to the postgraduate education process beginning in Turkey and ending at NPS in USA. The major findings drawn from the interviews included the lack of adequate information on postgraduate education prior to attending NPS, a general dissatisfaction among the Army and Navy officers with the way in which their curriculum subspecialties were chosen, the lack of information about credit requirements for graduation from NPS, the uncovered expenses of the married officers' dependents, and the high value that the Turkish officers place on NPS education. The thesis concludes with recommended courses of action that may help the Departments of the Turkish Army and Navy.

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SCHOOL: SOCIAL, CULTURAL, AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the Turkish officers at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The study examines the Turkish officer experiences before and during their postgraduate education at NPS. Focused interviews were conducted with 20 Turkish officers. All interviews were taped and then transcribed. Analysis of the transcripts revealed ten critical themes. These themes covered many topics, including problems related to the postgraduate education process beginning in Turkey and ending at NPS in USA. The major findings drawn from the interviews included the lack of adequate information on postgraduate education prior to attending NPS, a general dissatisfaction among the Army and Navy officers with the way in which their curriculum subspecialties were chosen, the lack of information about credit requirements for graduation from NPS, the uncovered expenses of the married officers' dependents, and the high value that the Turkish officers place on NPS education. The thesis concludes with recommended courses of action that may help the Departments of the Turkish Army and Navy.



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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

The mission of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF), in times of war or in situations that threaten the internal security, for all service branches, is to protect and to defend the Turkish Nation, territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty against any kind of aggression, nationally or NATO-wide. [Ref. 1:p. 1] The main purpose of the TAF is to successfully achieve the missions that may be encountered in accordance with operational concepts based on future threat assessments, future battlefields, and technological improvements.

To achieve the above-mentioned purposes, the TAF has undertaken many initiatives, one of which is to enhance its officers' leadership, administrative, tactical, and technical capabilities. As a result, the TAF has been sending carefully selected officers for postgraduate education to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) since the 1950s. Recently the number of officers sent to the NPS has increased. The Turkish Army was sending two to four officers, and the Turkish Navy was sending 30 to 35 officers to NPS until 1997. Now in 1999, the number of Turkish Army officers has increased to 38 bringing the sum of the Turkish Army and Naval Officers for 1999 to 71. This increase makes Turkey the second largest represented country after the United States at NPS.

To get the maximum benefit out of the postgraduate education of the Turkish officers, it is important for the TAF to look for ways to improve the postgraduate education process, which starts from the notification order issued to Turkish officers in Turkey and extends into the educational experience at NPS.

## **B. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research explores administrative, cultural, and social problems and experiences encountered by Turkish officers who attend NPS. The following research questions are addressed:

1. How can the TAF improve the postgraduate education process, which begins in Turkey and extends to NPS?
2. Are there problems facing current Turkish officers at NPS? If so, what are they?
3. What is going well for Turkish officers at NPS?
4. What kind of procedures can be established to help Turkish officers improve their postgraduate education experience at NPS?

## **C. METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE**

The thesis uses various literature including studies, rules and regulations. Additionally, interviews were conducted with 20 Turkish Army and Navy officers who are currently at NPS. To gain insight into the background of the TAF, these three topics are explored:

- The history of the TAF including the Turkish Army and Turkish Navy
- The role and status of the TAF in the Turkish society
- The structure and hierarchy of the Turkish Army and Navy

The thesis focuses on these issues:

- The problems that the foreign students encounter in the United States of America and problems specific to the Turkish students in the United States.
- The current regulations, rules, and codes for the Turkish officers at the Naval Postgraduate School.

#### **D. BENEFIT OF THE STUDY**

Conclusions of this thesis may guide Turkish Armed Forces policy makers to update and use the rules, regulations, and codes for sending its officers to the Naval Postgraduate School, and help the Turkish officers overcome the problems that they encounter at the Naval Postgraduate School. The potential benefit of this thesis for the Turkish Armed Forces may be an improvement of the postgraduate education process. Results will play an important role in solving the problems of the Turkish officers before and during their experience at the Naval Postgraduate School.

#### **E. ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

Following this introductory chapter, the study is organized into five chapters. Chapter II provides background information on the structure and history of the TAF (Turkish Army and Turkish Navy) and the role and status of the TAF in the Turkish society. Chapter III examines the administrative procedures for sending the selected officers to the Naval Postgraduate School. Chapter IV includes the analysis of interviews done with 20 Turkish Army and Navy officers at the Naval Postgraduate School to explore their social, cultural, and administrative problems. Chapter V summarizes the

results and presents conclusions and policy recommendations regarding the Turkish officers and the postgraduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School.

## **II. BACKGROUND**

This chapter introduces the Turkish Armed Forces, as well as the history, mission, and force structure of the Turkish Army and Navy. Since there are no Turkish Air Force students at Naval Postgraduate School, the study does not include the Turkish Air Force. It also contains an historical review of the role and status of the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF). The primary emphasis is on the Army, because the Army is the largest and most developed of the three service components. This review is used to show the importance of the TAF in Turkish society. The chapter also discusses the historical lessons that influence modern Turkish officers.

### **A. TURKISH ARMED FORCES: GENERAL ORGANIZATION FOR DEFENSE**

The position, representation, and employment of the TAF in the structure of the Turkish government are regulated by the Turkish Constitution. According to the Constitution:

- The office of Commander-in-Chief is inseparably vested in the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA).
- The Chief of the General Staff is appointed by the President as the Commander of the Armed Forces and is responsible to the Prime Minister for his duties.
- The Council of Ministers is responsible to the TGNA for national security and preparation of the armed forces for defense of the country.

However, the TGNA has the authority to declare a state of war and to dispatch Turkish Armed Forces to foreign countries or to allow foreign armed forces to be deployed in Turkey. [Ref. 1:p. 58]



The chief of the Turkish General Staff is in charge of the overall command of the Turkish Armed Forces and is responsible for their effective conduct of military operations and combat readiness. The Chief of the General Staff determines principles and priorities for personnel, information, training, education and logistic services of the Armed Forces. [Ref. 1:p. 58]

## **B. THE TURKISH ARMY**

### **1. Mission**

Along with the other services, the Turkish Land Forces Command's (TLFC) mission, in times of war or in situations that threaten internal security, is to protect and defend the Turkish nation—its territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty against any kind of aggression, nationally or NATO-wide. TLFC also contributes to peace-keeping forces in support of operations such as in Somalia and Bosnia-Herzegovina to sustain World peace. [Ref. 1:p. 59]

### **2. Force Structure**

In its new force structure, TLFC has four Army Headquarters (HQ), nine Corps HQs, one Infantry Division, two Mechanized Infantry Divisions (Tactical HQ), nine Infantry Brigades (BDEs), 18 Mechanized Infantry BDEs, 15 Armored BDEs, four Commando BDEs, three Training Divisions, and seven Training BDEs. [Ref. 1:p. 59]

TLFC has assigned one Mechanized Infantry Division (with one Armored BDE and one Mechanized BDE) and one Commando Brigade to the multinational force set under the framework of re-structuring NATO. These units are also supported by support elements at every level. The Army has approximately 400,000 military personnel and 22,000 civilian personnel. [Ref. 1:p. 59]

## **C. THE TURKISH NAVY**

### **1. Mission**

Turkey is composed of two peninsulas: Anatolia and Thrace. Surrounded by the Black Sea, the Sea of Marmara, the Aegean, and the Mediterranean, she has a total coastline of 8,272 km. Turkey also has an exceptional geostrategic location at the gateway of three continents: Europe, Asia, and Africa. These geographical features, along with the peculiarities of inherent mobility and build-up flexibility of naval forces, give the Turkish Navy very important national and regional roles. [Ref. 1:p. 60]

Broadly stated, the mission of the Turkish Navy is to defend the country against threats from the sea and to maintain and protect national maritime interests. In peacetime, major tasks of that mission include:

- Providing and maintaining of deterrence through development of force structure, training and exercises.
- Maintaining presence overseas where national interests require it to do so and providing intelligence.
- Providing the security for sea transport lines.
- When necessary, participating in peace support operations, humanitarian assistance, natural disaster and refugee relief, and search and rescue operations.
- Participating in joint operations with other national or allied security forces against terrorism, drug trafficking, and smuggling.
- Cooperating with the Coast Guard to protect national interests and environmental protection over the Exclusive Economic Zone.

In times of crisis and war, these tasks expand to cover strategic deterrence, crisis response, sea control, and participation in Allied Operations or, when necessary, Coalition Operations.

[Ref. 1:p. 60]

## **2. Force Structure**

The Turkish Navy is composed of an HQ and four main sub-commands. In peacetime, the Coast Guard is subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior. In times of crisis and war, the Coast Guard performs its duties under the operational command of the Chief of the Turkish Navy. The personnel status of the Turkish Navy includes 54,000 military personnel and 14,000 civilians. [Ref. 1:p. 60]

## **D. THE ARMED FORCES AND SOCIETY**

The armed forces traditionally have held a place of distinction in Turkish national life. Over the centuries, the Army has been perceived as a civilizing and humanizing factor in society. In the modern era, it has been seen as the embodiment of enlightened, progressive forces that inspired the revolt of 1908 against Ottoman rule and later prevented the nation's dismemberment by driving out the post-World War I occupying armies. The Army also received credit for having rescued the nation from turmoil and violence during the late 1970s. [Ref. 2:p. 1] And as recently as the late 1980s, soldiers enjoyed widespread respect as a symbol of Turkish national identity and as the inheritors of the country's long martial tradition.

### **1. History of the Army**

A young cadet in the Military Academy would probably sum up the history of the Army in the following way. From the foundation of the Ottoman Empire in 1299 to its fall in 1918, the Army always played a very active part in the expansion of the Ottoman Empire

land. The early history of the Ottoman Empire is rooted in the exploits of the Janissary Army, the principal source of strength that enabled quick conquests on the three continents (Asia, Europe, and North Africa). Like everything else in the land, the Janissary Army belonged to the Sultan and performed indispensable services for him. The Janissaries fought battles, collected taxes, and governed the conquered regions. As the boundaries grew wider, the Empire became stronger and the Janissaries richer with the spoils of the conquests. [Ref. 7:pp. 92-93]

The Ottoman rulers always felt it necessary to keep the Janissaries contented. For instance, they were given bounty by the Sultan on his accession to the throne, and they rose up when given less than expected, or none at all. Unrest among the Janissaries grew under the reign of less powerful rulers who provided fewer conquests and fewer spoils. For one reason or another, five Sultans and forty-three Viziers were removed from power or killed by the Janissaries in times of revolt. [Ref. 7:p. 93]

The active role of the Army and Navy in dethroning Sultan Abdulaziz (in the 19<sup>th</sup> century) was the clearest indication that military interference in politics had not been eliminated, despite the suppression of the Janissaries. However, the Janissary uprisings of the past had been motivated by financial rather than political interests. The first constitutional monarchy was also the first instance in which the Army was involved in the overthrow of the Sultan for political reasons. [Ref. 7:p. 93]

Unlike the reactionary Janissaries, officers in the new-style Army, in the course of military modernization, were influenced by liberal Western ideas and led the way in progressive movements and innovations. With a totally different outlook, they renounced personal interests in favor of patriotism and the salvation of the Empire. But they also

became much more involved in politics as the pace of modernization quickened. [Ref. 7:p. 93]

Following Abdulhamid II's accession to the throne in 1876, the Ottoman liberals proclaimed the first constitution with the support of the Army. Military involvement in politics increased even more when Abdulhamid closed down the Assembly on the pretext of the Russian War and reestablished absolute power. [Ref. 7:pp. 93-94]

In 1889, Young Turks and students from the Army Academy and the Schools of Medicine and Political Science formed the Committee for Union and Progress, which soon also included members from the officer class. The Committee had started as a movement against the repressive rule of Abdulhamid II and succeeded in overthrowing him in 1909 with the substantial support of the Army. However, the following years are full of examples showing the disastrous consequences of political involvement by the Army. [Ref. 7:p. 94]

The period between 1909 and 1919, when Ataturk left for Samsun to start the movement for Liberation, was one of the most difficult in the country's history. The Army was divided by conflicting loyalties in support of the government and the opposition, and internal strife led to defeat in the Balkan Wars. The history of this period, read in great detail in the Military Academies and never forgotten by any Turkish officer, is full of events that show how the Army disintegrated as a result of political manipulation. [Ref. 7:p. 94]

All of Ataturk's speeches that were intended to distance the Army from politics bear the mark of that period. Although at the time his words were unheeded, Ataturk believed that the Army was effective in giving political direction to the state, but that it had to confine itself to military matters after having done its duty and leave politics to the Assembly. [Ref. 7:p. 94]

The following extract from a speech by Ataturk at the congress of the Union and Progress Party in Salonika in 1909 is the most vivid exposition of his views on the subject:

As long as Army officers remain members of the Union and Progress Party, we can have neither a strong party nor a strong Army. A large proportion of the officers of Third (Salonika) Army is also members of the party. They cannot be described as particularly powerful figures and people will be put off from joining the Party by the exclusively military support. Let us also resolve the matter once and for all. Let the officers who want to stay in the Party resign from the Army and let us also legislate to make it illegal for military men to take part in politics or join a party. [Ref. 7:pp. 94-95]

Ataturk believed that an Army that did not enjoy the support of the people could not bring about the changes necessary to the country. The lasting reforms of a true revolution could be achieved only with the support of the people. He demonstrated his point when he set foot in Anatolia by wearing mufti and rousing the people to action for the War of Independence. It is clear that the force created the Turkish republic, but it could not have performed that task without the support of the people. [Ref. 7:p. 95]

Ataturk and his chief Lieutenants were all career officers when they began the national movement for independence. Although Ataturk subsequently endeavored to separate the military from the ordinary conduct of political affairs, he nevertheless considered the Army the "intelligentsia of the Turkish nation" and "guardian of ideals." [Ref. 3:p. 1]

A ruling of the Grand National Assembly in late 1923 barred individuals from simultaneously being members of the assembly and active military officers, and during the single-party years, the armed forces maintained a low profile. However, between 14 and 20 percent of the deputies in the assembly during this period were men with military backgrounds. The proportion of ex-military officers among the political elite declined after 1950. [Ref. 3:p. 1]

## **E. THE MODERN MILITARY**

### **1. The Mission and Structure of the Military**

Since the founding of the republic in 1923, the officially-stated primary mission of the armed forces has been the defense of the country's territorial integrity against the actions of foreign aggressors. With Turkey's accession to NATO in 1952, it was reasonable to assume that, in accordance with provisions of the organization's treaty, Turkey could expect concerted assistance from other allied countries in carrying out the primary mission. Similarly, Turkey's membership in NATO has exacted responsibility from its military establishment for near total commitment in the event of general war with the Soviet Union and other Warsaw Pact forces. In addition to its primary mission, the military has traditionally provided backup for the internal security forces in maintaining public order. [Ref. 5:p. 254]

The Army (sometimes referred to as the land forces) is by far the largest and most developed of the three service components. The size of the ground force component—particularly its combat elements—makes it one of the larger standing armies in the world, second only to that of the United States within the NATO alliance. In terms of size, organization of major tactical units, quality of training, and traditional fighting spirit, the Turkish Army is equal to its important NATO mission. Nevertheless, equipment deficiencies, which limit its defensive capabilities against a thrust by modern armored formations, present a substantial problem to the Western alliance. [Ref. 4:p. 1]

The Army operates from headquarters in Ankara. The capital city is also the site of the Ankara garrison and certain training and logistical facilities. The location of the command elements of the Army affords close liaison with the Chief of the General Staff in

his Ankara headquarters. The division of the country into four military sectors reflects strategic conditions of terrain, logistics, communications, and potential external threat. These sectors are assigned to four field armies, each of which is further divided into several Army corps. Each corps of the First and Third Armies has two or three subordinate divisions of about 12,000 soldiers each. Each of the two corps of the Second Army has two or three brigades directly subordinate to it; there is no divisional structure. The Fourth Army, known as the Aegean Army, has only brigade-sized training units. Divisions are organized in triangular fashion, with three regiments per division and three battalions per regiment. [Ref. 4:p. 1]

Four communication and logistical zone commands and a training command of five or six training corps support the field armies. Small division support elements are integral units of division and higher echelon organizations. Assigned aircraft consist of helicopters and light observation planes. [Ref. 4:p. 1]

Largely because of the advice and military aid received from the United States and, to a lesser degree, other NATO countries, the organization of Turkey's military somewhat reflects the influence of American defense practices. In general, the structural form of service units and the doctrine of their employment are similar to those of comparable United States military components. However, technological differences arising from the relative size and sophistication of the two nations are readily apparent. [Ref. 5:p. 260]

## **2. Induction and Training of Military Personnel**

Most candidates entering the service academies in the early 1980s were drawn from the lower middle and middle classes. Among Army and Air Force cadets, about 40 percent are the sons of military, gendarmerie, or civil servants, which suggests, one analyst notes, a



perpetuation of kinship and personal ties to the spirit of Ataturk and the revolution. The proportion for the Navy, at 55 percent, is even higher. Fewer than ten percent of those entering the Army and Air Force academies in the early 1980s were from farm families, and none of the naval cadets had an agricultural background. Most cadets, particularly Air Force cadets, were recruited from urban areas of the country in the same period. One might have expected that many cadets would be drawn from rural communities and small towns where the bulk of Turkey's population is still found, and where the attraction of a military career as a channel of social mobility would be strong. However, the greater opportunity to complete a middle school or high-school education in the more populated areas accounts for the preponderance of cadets from urban centers. Geographically, central Anatolia and the coastal areas adjacent to the Aegean and Marmara Seas are represented disproportionately. [Ref. 2:p. 1]

The sole source of regular commissioned officers is the Turkish Military Academy (sometimes referred to as the War Academy) at Ankara. Those cadets completing the course successfully are commissioned as Second Lieutenants. The Army also operates three military high schools, which are the primary source of cadet recruitment. A free education emphasizing science, mathematics, and languages is provided under the supervision of the general staff. Some of the lectures are conducted in English. As in the case of the military academy, admission is by competitive examination. Between 1982 and 1984, only four percent of applicants to the high schools were accepted, and about 20 percent by the Turkish Military Academy. [Ref. 4:p. 2]

Military medical doctors are educated at the Military Medical School, but service specialists such as dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists, and engineers are expected to obtain

their training at civilian institutions before entering the service. Career Noncommissioned officers (NCOs), selected after completing secondary school and accepting long-term enlistments, receive two years of training at the NCO schools. [Ref. 4:p. 2]

At appropriate times, officers expect to take advanced courses at their branch schools, and many have training in the United States and Western Europe under military assistance programs. The most prestigious assignment in the Army school system is to the General Staff College in Istanbul. There, carefully selected officers of Captain rank go through a two-year program of study and staff practice. Those successfully completing the course receive the coveted General Staff Corps designation and, thereafter, are assigned to the General Staff or to important command positions. The Air Force and Navy maintain their own general staff colleges at the same location. There are, in addition, two joint-service institutions. The Armed Forces Academy trains officers of Major or Lieutenant Commander rank in a range of military, political, and administrative subjects, as well as in strategy and tactics. The National Security Academy provides six months of training in coordinated operations of the armed forces to officers of ranks equivalent to Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel. [Ref. 4:p. 2]

### **3. Attitudes Within the Military**

The first elements of military training and discipline are inculcated during the early school years. Later, during their military education, students are instilled with the values of Kemalism (the precepts of Ataturk); they learn to take pride in the military's role in protecting the democratic state against the extremes of left and right and the appeal of Islamic Theocracy.

Officers tend to develop a nationalistic and hierarchical outlook. In the pre-1960 era, a minority of junior officers had a left-wing orientation, but, in general, cohesiveness and discipline are believed to have made the officer corps immune to radicalism. Vigilance against the infiltration of leftist currents within the military is intense, although in its political role, the military leadership adopted a pose of balance between left and right. Political conspiracies arising from within the ranks of the junior officers are regarded as unlikely in light of the pervasive nationalism and sense of obedience to the Kemalist spirit. [Ref. 2:p. 1]

Efforts to evade the draft or obtain unjustified deferments are rare. For those many young soldiers coming from a civilian life offering few amenities and doubtful employment prospects, active duty means adequate food, shelter, and clothing, and perhaps an opportunity to further their education and acquire useful job training. For most, Army service offers an interlude from the unvarying pace of village life and is a source of pride, linking them to the warrior tradition in Turkish society. [Ref. 2:p. 2]

Although enlisted personnel receive all the essentials, barracks life is austere. For conscripts, the pay is nominal, often not enough to cover even personal purchases at post exchanges. The financial sacrifice entailed in compulsory military service appears to be an accepted part of Turkish life. [Ref. 2:p. 2] The many thousands of servicemen who have received training in skills that are useful to them—and to national development efforts—when they return to civilian life say that the sacrifices are well-justified. [Ref. 4:p. 253]

#### **4. The Modern Military in Society and Politics**

National development and the modernization process within the civilian sector have been the ultimate beneficiaries of much of the specialized training Turkish soldiers receive

during their required period of military service. Throughout the 1960s, the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of National Education coordinated an effort to improve the national literacy level. A law passed in 1960 permitted qualified secondary school graduates to spend all but six months of their required two years of military service working as teachers in village schools, thereby alleviating a shortage of instructors in rural areas. Under this program, hundreds of thousands of young Turks learned to read and write. [Ref.5:p.255]

The armed forces have participated in a variety of other civic action programs designed to benefit the civilian population—projects that, at the same time, have enhanced the public image of the military. Notable among these efforts has been a series of agricultural conservation projects, in which Army units have terraced fields and planted trees as a way of reducing the hazard of erosion in dominant crop areas of the country. Army engineers have also assisted in the construction and improvement of the country's system of roads. [Ref. 5:p. 255]

Although civilian politicians have achieved supremacy in matters of policymaking and control, the military—especially the Army—has continued to play a decided role in the republic's political life. Despite Ataturk's admonition against such involvement, the armed forces have remained the most potent of the society's interest groups. For example, six of the last nine presidents had been former high-ranking military officers, recruited primarily from the Office of the Chief of the General Staff by contending political parties. This aspect of Turkish political reality was exemplified during the 1973 presidential election by a remark made by Ismet Inonu, Ataturk's closest military associate and immediate successor as president of the republic. According to Inonu, "The military sincerely respects the

political parties as nonceasing elements of our democratic life, and all our political parties comprehend the responsibility which the military carries in our country's life. The strength and vigor of our democracy arises from the existence of such a balance." [Ref. 4:pp. 253-254]

Because there has been no precise way to determine when restraint yields to the guardianship requirement, decisions to invoke the latter responsibility have been difficult and controversial. At times, the divisions between the senior military officers and the civilian political leaders with whom they disagreed have been affected not only by ideology, but also by long-standing personality differences. [Ref. 4:p. 254]

Throughout most of the 1970s, the military leadership maintained a moderate reformist and centrist orientation. This group generally believed that the real threats to Turkish democracy arose from the goals and practices of communist and religious extremists and the resulting conflict between the two elements. At the same time, however, they have kept a wary eye on politicians who have shown signs of allowing their personal interests to interfere with the welfare of the country as a whole. [Ref. 5:p. 254]

The standing of the officer corps as a most honored calling has run as a basic thread through all Ottoman and modern Turkish history. This respect for and confidence in military commanders has, in recent times, prompted them to intervene either when they saw threats to the state or when they wanted to encourage popular acceptance of a military move. Confidence in the Army was further consolidated during the struggle for independence under Ataturk before the modern role of the military could fully take shape. [Ref. 6:p. 180]

## **F. LESSONS LEARNED FROM HISTORY .**

The Turkish officer of today in no way resembles the officer of the Ottoman Army. In fact, he does not like such a comparison. But he draws certain lessons from studying the history of the period: [Ref. 7:pp. 95-96]

- The Turkish Army has always had its say and place in the government of the country and, at the very least, has influenced developments. And, through its role in the War of Independence, it established the Turkish Republic.
- By becoming actively involved in politics, the Turkish Army was divided and, as a consequence, suffered defeat in the Balkan Wars. As Ataturk said, it paid dearly for its involvement in politics.

These two instructive points lead the officer to form the following conclusion for today: The Turkish Army must not become actively involved in politics. Instead, its job is to guard and protect Turkish Republic, which was founded on so much bloodshed, and to intervene only if these are endangered. Once developments have been settled, it must return to the barracks.

The future Commander's approach develops, therefore, along the following lines:  
[Ref. 7:p. 96]

- From the pile of rubble that buried Turkey, Ataturk created something out of nothing. To enable his creation to survive, he made certain revolutionary changes and set up certain principles. Turkey's survival depends on upholding these principles. To defend these principles is to defend the country.
- My country is surrounded by dangers from abroad and fraught with dangers at home.

- Ataturk established democracy as a goal. If Turkey's future independence is threatened, then it is my duty to resist the threat. Let no one think this country does not have its champion.

The 35,000-strong Turkish officer corps does, in fact, expect and demand that our population of 62 million should see its viewpoint and think along the same lines. And, so far, it has sought to achieve this without much effort, because it regards itself, rightly or wrongly, as more self-sacrificing, better-educated, more perspicacious, in short, superior. [Ref. 7:p. 96]

## G. CONCLUSION

Traditionally, Turkish society has honored its military heroes and their contributions to the nation. The norms of "*ghazi* and *martyr*" fully describe the Armed Forces for eleven centuries in Turkish society. The warriors of the nation still go into the battle shouting: "*If I return I'll be a ghazi, if I die a martyr*" [Ref. 9:p. 6].

The role of the soldier in the national struggle and the creation of the new state gives him an honored place in Kemalist society [Ref. 6:p. 121]. During the final period of the Ottoman Empire, the military was viewed as a career that had lost its glamour and was no longer the way to upward mobility and prestige. But, after the Republic was formed, this changed [Ref. 7:p. 122]. In fact, Turkish society saw the military leaders of the struggle as the political leaders of the new state. Their sophisticated education levels and vision were a resource for the nation.

Today, the Turkish people remain proud of their Army, want it to be strong, and accord it a status that no other Army in a NATO country enjoys. In Turkey, the Army is always praised, and in an emergency, it is seen as the nation's savior. The truth is, however,

that the Turkish public knows very little about the guiding force of this gigantic body—the 35,000-strong officer corps. In no other civilized country in the world is an Army so close to the hearts of the people. [Ref. 7:p. XIII]

No other Army is as faithful to its traditions, or as keen to draw lessons from history, as the Turkish Army is. [Ref. 7:p. 92] Future commanders are well instructed in the colorful and heroic, though at times unfortunate, history of their Army, which dates back centuries, to the Ottomans. Indeed, a historical view of the Turkish Army makes it clear that military involvement in politics did not begin in 1960, and that, from the beginning, the Army has functioned either as the ruling power or as an inseparable part of it. [Ref. 7:p. 92]

The armed forces prevented the nation's dismemberment by driving out the post-World War I occupying armies, received credit for having rescued the nation from turmoil and violence during the late 1970s, and as a result, have held a place of distinction in Turkish national life. The Turkish officers at the Naval Postgraduate School are receiving postgraduate education in different subspecialty programs to better serve the TAF. The future contributions of these officers will be important to the achievement of the mission, and the modernization of the TAF. Therefore, the TAF should seek ways to improve the postgraduate education of these officers during their stay at the Naval Postgraduate School to maximize the benefits that will be gained from them.





### **III. TURKISH OFFICERS AT THE NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

This chapter describes the requirements and administrative procedures for evaluating and selecting Turkish Officers for postgraduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). [Ref. 11 and 12] In addition, it examines the responsibilities of Turkish officers and senior officers while attending NPS. Finally, the chapter looks at Turkish officers' compensation—wages and benefits.

#### **A. QUALIFICATIONS**

The following section contains the requirements—the codes, rules and regulations—a Turkish officer must meet in order to qualify for postgraduate education at NPS. Applicants must satisfy the following criteria:

- Army officers must be graduates of either the Army Academy or of a college, and Naval officers must be graduates of the Naval Academy.
- Army officers must be in the first three years of the rank of First Lieutenant. Army staff officers, on the other hand, must have completed two years of active duty service as staff officers and must hold the rank of Captain or Major. Naval officers must be in the second or third year of the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade. Applicants must have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.25 or higher. If the required number of officers has not attained a 3.25 GPA, then the requirement for GPA can be reduced to a floor of 3.00. The same rule applies to Turkish graduates of West Point and the U.S. Naval Academy.
- Applicants must not have earned a master's degree at NPS before.
- Applicants must not have been convicted of any crimes.

- Applicants cannot be handicapped.
- Army officers must have a fitness report filled out by their superiors. Navy officers must have at least an 80 percent of the total score on their fitness reports starting from the year commissioned up until the year of application.
- Army and Navy officers must score 540 or higher on the "Test of English as a Foreign Language" (TOEFL) test.
- Army officers must be graduates of one of the following programs: Systems Engineering, Systems Management, Operations Research, or Engineering subspecialty programs.

## **B. THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

### **1. Procedures**

Officers applying for admission to NPS must go through the following process:

- Officers who satisfy the above-stated criteria and who seek enrollment at NPS should apply with a petition that is issued by the Department of Army or Navy. Army and Navy officers will submit their petitions, with the Feature Document, which involves the achievements and summary information in ten categories about the applicant officers, filled out and approved by their superiors, no later than the deadline assigned by the Departments of Army and Navy. The applicants' average score in the Feature Document must be 80 or higher.
- Applicants must provide "Eligible for Postgraduate Education Abroad" comments written by their superiors. Upon receipt of the required documents,

the Department of the Army begins to evaluate the applications of Army officers.

- After evaluating the petition, Eligibility Document, and graduation GPA of Navy officers, the Department of the Navy notifies eligible candidates. Upon notification, the Turkish Naval Academy Command sends the candidate officers a list of references for a test in mathematics and physics, which they must take before being admitted to NPS. The test questions are prepared by a commission appointed by the Naval Training and Educational Command. The candidates must score at least 2.5 out of 4.0 points. If enough officers do not achieve this, then the requirement may be reduced to 2.0 with the permission of the Turkish Naval Command.
- The Turkish Naval Academy sends the test results directly to the Turkish Naval Command. In an appendix to the results, each successful officer is given additional comments, based on his or her performance and area of study at the Naval Academy, in order to recommend a suitable program at NPS. After being selected to attend NPS, the candidate takes the TOEFL test and sends the result to Personnel Department of the Naval Command.

## **2. Breakdown of the Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria are weighted as follows:

- GPA: 45 percent
- Science test (after converting the total points into 4): 15 percent

- TOEFL test (after converting the highest grade of the candidates into 4): 15 percent
- The sum of all fitness report scores up to the year of selection after dividing by 25: 20 percent
- Personality and interview test: 5 percent

After the assessment, the candidates are ranked in order of their total points. In the case of equal points, the criteria are weighted in the following order: GPAs, fitness report points, the TOEFL test, the science test, personality test results, and interview. When deciding the postgraduate program that each selected officer will enter, NPS takes into consideration the officer's choices and the Turkish Naval Academy's recommendations. When an officer cannot be sent due to a medical problem, his or her name is directly put on the next year's list of selected officers.

#### **C. PROCEDURES JUST PRIOR TO ARRIVAL AT NPS**

The selected officers are required to take an "Eligible To Attend Duties Abroad" health examination at a full-service military hospital and submit this report to the Army or Navy command. Then, the transcripts, TOEFL results, and the suggested programs of the selected officers are sent to NPS along with the application forms. (The Foreign Courses Department Head at the DOA, and the In-service Training Department Head at the DON picks the programs of the selected officers based on these officers' programs at the Turkish Army and Naval Academies and the present and future needs of the DOA and DON.)

When NPS approves the officers' chosen curricula, the Turkish Army and Navy Command issues the final list of officers. The officers are then assigned to billets in

Army or Navy Headquarters that are related to their curricula at the Naval Postgraduate School. When officers come to their assigned billets, they must submit the following documents to their assigned duty command:

- “Departure and Arrival” form
- “Able to Attend Duties Abroad” health report
- Military housing document
- Two copies of military and, if married, dependents’ identification cards
- Five photos of the officer and, if married, three photos of each dependent

During their stay in the Department of the Army, Army officers complete the following procedures under the command and directives of the Foreign Courses Command:

- Report arrival
- Get a passport and visa
- Fill out the proxy document, a document that must be confirmed by a Notary Public ensuring that the entity or the person sponsoring the applicant officer will be liable to pay a certain amount of indemnity to the government in the case of a failure to return to Turkey, information form, and military housing document
- Have a briefing on their selected curriculum
- Contact the United States Embassy, Coordination Office, and Military Attaché
- Attend an orientation program about NPS

Naval Officers complete the same procedures under the direction of the relevant Duty Commands in the Department of the Navy.

## **D. RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES OF TURKISH OFFICERS AT NPS**

### **1. Educational Issues**

- Turkish Officers' length of stay at NPS varies across curricula, ranging from 18 to 30 months. The officers are informed about this when they fill out the proxy document.
- The officer cannot change the length of the stay and the curriculum, which have been determined by the Department of Army or Navy. The Department of the Turkish Army or Navy may make changes about the length of a curriculum only if the Naval Postgraduate School requires these changes.
- If an officer is unable to complete his postgraduate education due to academic failure, and his or her failure is confirmed by NPS, then the Turkish Armed Forces will revoke this officer's right to attend NPS. The officer will go on trial in the Turkish Military Court based on the 926th amendment of the Personnel Law of the Turkish Armed Forces.
- Army officers must send or deliver three copies of their thesis to the Department of the Army and related commands. Navy officers must send or deliver five copies of their thesis to the Department of the Navy and related commands.
- An officer can earn an "Engineering Degree" or Ph.D. at NPS if he receives approval from both NPS and the Department of the Turkish Army or Navy and is willing to complete the requirements for the degree.

- Army and Navy officers fill out quarter-end academic performance forms and submit them to their senior officers. The senior officers then submit these forms to the Turkish Department of the Army or Navy.
- Turkish officers are responsible for successfully completing their postgraduate education during their stay at NPS. Upon graduation, officers submit their diplomas to the Turkish Department of the Army or Navy.
- Before the start of the last quarter, Turkish officers fill out "Assignment Request Information Forms" and submit them to their senior officers. The senior officers then submit these forms to the Turkish Department of the Army or Navy.

## **2. Behavior Issues**

- Within three days of arriving at NPS, officers should report their arrival date directly or via the senior officer, if one has been assigned.
- As representatives of the Turkish Nation and the Turkish Armed Forces, all officers must plan their personal and official lives so as never to bring shame on themselves, the Turkish Nation, and the Turkish Armed Forces, and act in compliance with the Turkish Military In-service law. In addition, when attending schools abroad, they must try hard to set a good example of success and honesty.
- Officers must show due respect not only to Turkish superior officers, but also to foreign superior officers.



- Officers must always anticipate the negative outcomes of any inappropriate actions and avoid such actions.
- Officers must reside in places that do not in any way undermine the honor of their duty, rank, and uniform.
- Officers will wear civilian dress in accordance with the Dress Code of NPS as long as wearing a uniform is not required.
- During their postgraduate education at NPS, Turkish officers must act in accordance with Turkish and U.S. rules, codes, laws, and regulations.
- Officers should report any problems to their senior officers, who, in turn, report them to the Turkish Army or Navy Attaché in Washington DC.
- Turkish officers must comply with the orders and warnings of their senior officers regarding educational, administrative, and disciplinary issues within the framework of the Turkish Military In-service law.

### **3. Responsibilities Upon Return to Turkey**

Upon return to Turkey, Navy officers may be required to submit their books, which are purchased by the Turkish Armed Forces, to the library of the Turkish Naval Academy. In addition, officers must submit their "Postgraduate Education Completion Report" to their new duty stations, and the new duty station command submits these reports to the Department of the Turkish Army or Navy.

## **E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SENIOR OFFICERS**

The Army and Navy senior officers are the administrative commanders of officers. Additionally, the Navy senior officer evaluates the Navy officers. Turkish senior officers have the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring that their inferiors comply with military rules, codes, and regulations, and coordinating their social activities.
- Coordinating the interactions of the officers in their command with NPS officials.
- Receiving new officers coming from Turkey and making necessary arrangements with NPS officials for their temporary stay at the Bachelor Officers' Quarters.
- Reporting the academic performance of the Turkish officers in their command to the Department of the Army or Navy with a form containing the following information:
  - Summary of academic performance
  - The academic report of the officer
  - Request for assignment of officers in their last quarter
- Serving as the senior officer of the Turkish Armed Forces at NPS.
- Reporting any changes by NPS in the requirements of an officer's curriculum to the Department of the Army or Navy.
- Reporting to the Department of Army or Navy the departure of an officer who has just completed his or her postgraduate education at NPS.

- Making arrangements for shipping the educational equipment of the Turkish officers who have completed their postgraduate studies via United States Naval Education and Training Security Assistance Field Activity (NETSAFA) and Office of Defense Cooperation Turkey (ODC-TU).

## **F. COMPENSATION**

### **1. Wages**

Wages, compensation, and other financial benefits of Turkish officers remain in effect in Turkey while they are at NPS and are returned to them in Turkey upon completion of postgraduate studies. While at NPS, officers are paid according to the Military Budget Law during their stay at NPS. All officers are paid equally, regardless of the curriculum they are in.

### **2. Health Care**

Turkish officers at NPS receive health care benefits according to the existing laws. An officer's medical costs are met according to the 211th amendment of the Turkish Military In-Service Law. Turkish officers must provide for the health care of their dependent(s), if any, at their own expense.

### **3. Vacation**

Turkish officers take their vacations during the vacation periods of NPS. Approval from the Department of the Army or Navy is required for emergency leave. Officers who choose to spend their leave outside the United States must get the approval of the Turkish Army or Naval Attaché.

A Turkish Army officer can spend an additional week of leave without pay to see to administrative issues after graduating from NPS. The United States military attaché, after approval by the Department of the Turkish Navy, can give a Navy officer a 15-day leave after graduation from the NPS. Upon return to Turkey, an officer can be given leave if needed.

## **G. RETURNING TO TURKEY**

### **1. Calling an Officer Back to Turkey**

An officer at NPS can be called back due to war and other extraordinary situations. He also can be tried by the Turkish Military Court for the failure to comply with rules or to meet the requirements of postgraduate education, or for involvement in any kind of trade activities.

The Turkish Army or Navy takes care of the procedures for calling an officer back to Turkey. After being notified of the decision by the Department of the Turkish Army or Navy, an officer must return to Turkey as soon as possible.

### **2. Military Commitments**

According to the 926th amendment of the Turkish Military Personnel Law, Turkish officers, after completing their postgraduate education at NPS, are expected to complete additional compulsory service for the Turkish Armed Forces. The relevant rules of the Turkish Military Personnel Law serve as the basis for the specification of the payments and other responsibilities incurred by the officer at NPS if the officer chooses to leave the military before the end of his compulsory service.



## **IV. ANALYSIS**

### **A. DATA COLLECTION**

This thesis uses information obtained through 20 in-depth interviews to explore the experiences of Turkish Army and Navy officers before and during their postgraduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS). The Army sample consisted of eight single and four married officers, and the Navy sample consisted of six single and two married officers. The Army officers were First Lieutenants, while the Navy officers were in the Lieutenant Junior Grade rank. The officers in the sample represented various curricula, professional backgrounds, and levels of experience. Interviewees were selected to create a group that was representative of the population of Turkish officers at NPS. For this purpose, 20 officers were selected. Appendix A shows the breakdown of interviewees by service, marital status, and curriculum subspecialty. The researcher recorded the interviews on audiocassettes and then transcribed them verbatim for ease of analysis.

Before each interview, the researcher made every effort to build rapport with the interviewee by establishing a tone of trust and confidentiality. Each interview was conducted in a private room to inspire casual conversation and candid responses to questions. The interviewee was informed that the conversation would be recorded for purposes of accuracy, but that no data traceable to the individual would be used.

Each interviewee appeared to feel at ease with the researcher and to candidly discuss his experiences, both positive and negative, before and during postgraduate education at NPS.

Interview questions were developed based on the time sequence of the

postgraduate education process starting from notification of the postgraduate education in Turkey and ending with the educational experience at NPS. Questions included each step of the postgraduate education process. Appendix B provides the interview questions, which were open-ended and provided ample latitude for the subjects to discuss whatever was on their minds. At times, their responses prompted the researcher to use more probing questions to clarify exactly what the interviewees were expressing.

## **B. DATA ANALYSIS AND THEME DEVELOPMENT**

The researcher performed content analysis on the data to develop themes by analyzing the data groupings of recurring problems and determining the underlying points made by the interviewees. The remainder of this chapter presents eleven themes, along with supporting justification. Each justification is reinforced by direct quotes from the interviewees.

## **C. THEMES**

### **1. Theme I: All interviewees felt that they were not given adequate information on postgraduate education prior to attending NPS.**

#### ***a. Theme***

All the Turkish officers interviewed reported that they had no information from any official source about the postgraduate education at NPS by the Department of the Army (DOA) or the Department of the Navy (DON). From the time they entered military high school, up until the time they are they are asked to take the TOEFL and science tests for admission to NPS, which is about 11 years, they received no information about postgraduate study at NPS. Furthermore, nine out of ten Army officers interviewed reported the late arrival of the application notification for NPS. One officer reported that he did not receive this notification from his command.

*b. Justification*

The officers interviewed for this study believe that the earlier the applicants receive information about postgraduate education, the longer they have to better prepare for the TOEFL and science tests. Moreover, the longer they prepare, the better grades they can get on these tests, which may increase their chances of being selected for the postgraduate education at NPS. The interviewees' responses echoed the one below.

An Army First Lieutenant (01)<sup>1</sup> gave the following response when asked how he first found out about postgraduate education at NPS:

I had in mind the idea of getting a Master's Degree long before graduating from Turkish Army Academy [TAA]. But I had no information from any official source about the postgraduate education at NPS except for what I fortunately heard from a former NPS graduate. After graduation from TAA, I continued to gather information on postgraduate education opportunities in Turkey. I heard about NPS when I got the notification of postgraduate education at NPS from the DOA in Spring 1997. If I had known earlier, I would have had more time to prepare and achieve better grades in TOEFL exams and science tests to be selected to the curriculum, which I wanted.

While all officers lacked information about the programs that are available at NPS, the Army officers had an additional concern regarding their application process. Army officers apply to DOA for selection to NPS. The late arrival of applications make it difficult to complete the application procedures on time. All Turkish Army officers presently at NPS had this problem, no matter where they were stationed. An Army First Lieutenant (03) said:

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<sup>1</sup> The code that appears here and elsewhere in parenthesis (e.g., 01) is used to identify the interviewee and to locate the corresponding transcript and data sheets for the interview. These codes contain no identifying information on the individuals interviewed.



My last assignment was a platoon commander in General Staff, Ankara. Normally, the flow of military correspondence to and from General Staff is perfect. For instance, I access all the stuff long before my colleagues do. But, as to the application notification for the postgraduate education at NPS, I got this late. As a result, I missed one of the TOEFL tests that I could have taken. Fortunately, I completed my application just before the deadline.

Another Army First Lieutenant (02) said:

My last assignment before coming to NPS was an infantry platoon commander. The application notification for postgraduate education at NPS never came to my battalion. I took leave in 1997 Winter and came across a friend of mine at the Corps Headquarters. This friend of mine told me about the application notification. It was less than two weeks before the deadline. In those two weeks, I made all possible efforts to complete the application procedures. Two weeks after the deadline, I called the foreign courses officer at DOA, and learned that I was eligible to take the TOEFL test.

**2. Theme II: The recently abolished TOEFL orientation program for Navy Officers was very useful.**

***a. Theme***

After graduating from the Naval Academy, Turkish Naval officers have little chance to improve their English skills because they work most of the day on ships, and the workload is high. The orientation program gave them a chance to prepare for the TOEFL test.

***b. Justification***

Turkish Navy officers receive a one-month TOEFL orientation program at the Turkish Naval Academy before they take the TOEFL tests. In this orientation program, they get TOEFL preparation classes. Three Navy officers strongly believed that if it hadn't been for the TOEFL orientation program at the Naval Academy, they would have never achieved a score over 540 in the TOEFL test.

A Lieutenant Junior Grade (04) said:

I worked at a large ship before coming to NPS. The workload at ship was extremely high. After normal work hours, I wanted to study English for the TOEFL test. But, there was nowhere on the ship that I could study. After I attended the orientation program, I had a chance to prepare for the TOEFL test. On my third try, I achieved a score over 540 in the TOEFL test. To tell the truth, if it hadn't been for the orientation program, I wouldn't have scored over 540.

Another Lieutenant Junior Grade (08) stated:

I worked at a small ship before coming to NPS. Compared to my colleagues' workload stationed at large ships, our workload was relatively less hard, but I still couldn't have enough time to prepare for the TOEFL test. The TOEFL orientation program was an important opportunity for me. By making use of this chance, I scored over 540 in the TOEFL test. I don't think I would have succeeded this without this program.

**3. Theme III: There was a general dissatisfaction among Army and Navy officers with the way in which their curriculum subspecialties were chosen and assigned.**

*a. Theme*

All Army officers expressed the belief that the DOA should allow them to choose curriculum subspecialties that reflect their interests and skills. If able to choose, officers are more likely to be motivated and productive. Most of the Navy officers stated that they were assigned to current curriculum subspecialty programs without taking their choices into consideration.

*b. Justification*

The justification for this theme lies in the following excerpts.

An Army First Lieutenant (13) stated:

I didn't and still don't know for sure what criteria the DOA used to select an officer to a curriculum subspecialty program. Without this information, what strategy could we implement to get any curriculum, which we wanted? I am not pleased with my curriculum subspecialty program and this adversely affects my motivation. I think the DOA

should give the applicant officers the right to choose and then send the selected officers based on their choices.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (09) stated:

I'm not too sure the DON took my choices into account. My choices were Financial Management, Acquisition and Contracting Management, and Electronics Systems Engineering, respectively. But I had been selected to Computer Science (CS) curriculum, which was out of my choices. My point is not whether CS curriculum is good or bad, but rather I should have been assigned to one of my choices for motivation and efficiency reasons.

Another Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (08) said:

My three choices were Computer Science, Electronics Systems Engineering and Operations Research respectively. I wasn't selected to any of these choices. As a result, I began my education at NPS with a frustration and couldn't concentrate on my study for the first two quarters. In my opinion, what is missing in the curriculum subspecialty program selection is information about what criteria the DON used to send us to our present programs. This must be revealed, so that prospective applicant officers will know what strategy to implement to get the curriculum subspecialty program they want.

**4. Theme IV: All Army officers believe that the orientation program at the DOA was not well organized.**

***a. Theme***

Army officers attend a two-week orientation program at the offices of DOA that relates to their curriculum subspecialty programs. During this program, they are supposed to learn about the current studies and projects that are undertaken by the DOA. This program should give the officers a chance to choose an appropriate thesis topic, which they can study at NPS. However, all the Army officers stated that the orientation program failed to yield such an outcome and was not well organized.

*b. Justification*

Ten Army officers interviewed received their orientation program at seven different offices of the DOA. The officials at some offices knew nothing about the orientation program, while others were unprepared because they didn't know what they were supposed to provide for the officers.

One Army First Lieutenant (01) stated:

Nothing went smoothly during the orientation program at the DOA. Actually, I couldn't get any orientation at all. The officials from whom I was supposed to get orientation did not know about it at all. So, the orientation program was not of much benefit to me. The meeting that we attended at TAA, on the other hand, was very well organized and of much benefit to all of us. We all had information on the postgraduate education at NPS from a former graduate of the Naval Postgraduate School.

Another Army First Lieutenant (07) said:

During two weeks of the orientation program, I couldn't learn anything about the education at NPS and the projects that the DOA was working on. Since I couldn't learn the projects and the needs of the DOA that are related to my program at NPS, I will probably not be able to do my thesis on a problematic issue of the Turkish Armed Forces. This is, in one sense, a loss.

Another Army First Lieutenant (15) said:

First of all, two weeks for this orientation program was not enough. What was good about the orientation program was that we got our orientation program at the offices that my friends and I will be assigned to. During this program, I was only able to complete the administrative stuff. The officials from whom I was supposed to get orientation program did not care much about my orientation. This was partly because of high workload, lack of coordination and partly scarcity of time. I couldn't get any information on the projects that were related to my program and think this is a loss in the sense that I will not be able to do my thesis about these projects.

**5. Theme V: The amount of time allowed for completing administrative procedures was inadequate.**

***a. Theme***

Virtually all of the interviewees had some problems with completing the administrative procedures within the time allowed. Problems ranged from getting a visa or passport to checking out of the married officers' housing facilities.

***b. Justification***

Among the officers interviewed, only four had no problems, and two were unable to complete the administrative procedures. The remaining officers had problems completing the administrative procedures.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (06) said:

The time frame allowed by the DON for completing the administrative procedures was too short. I couldn't even finish travel allowance procedures and came to NPS without any travel allowance. I had to get this job done while I was here at NPS.

An Army First Lieutenant (19) said:

The time frame allowed by the DOA for completing the administrative procedures was not enough for me. The biggest problem I got was that I couldn't check out of the military housing within the time frame allowed. As a result, I still pay the rent for the military housing in Turkey even if I am here at NPS.

Another Army First Lieutenant (15) said:

The time frame allowed by the DOA for completing the administrative stuff wasn't enough. I hardly managed to complete all the procedures on the very last day before the flight. The biggest problem I got was that it was embarrassing for me to wait in the line with my uniforms on outside in the street. I think the DOA can designate a person to keep track of this job.

**6. Theme VI: One week is not enough time to adapt to the United States and NPS.**

**a. Theme**

The longer the adaptation period, the better the officers can prepare themselves for life in the U.S. and postgraduate education at NPS.

**b. Justification**

The most common reason for dissatisfaction among the Turkish officers was that one week was not long enough to finish the essentials of life: finding an apartment, buying a car, and completing the administrative procedures at NPS.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (09) stated:

I came here to NPS in January 1999. The briefing given by the International Office at NPS was a useful guidance for completing administrative procedures and adapting to life in the USA to some degree. In the first week at NPS, I was lucky to find an apartment which is close to NPS. I was lucky because if it were away from NPS, I would have to walk to and from the school. After one and a half month, I got my car and driver license and was finally able to stand on my feet.

An Army First Lieutenant (14) said:

I came to NPS in January 1999. After completing the administrative stuff at NPS, I searched for an apartment and a car. One week later, I found an apartment in downtown and made a contract with the property manager. Since I didn't have a car, I had to stay at Bachelor Officers' Quarters (BOQ) until I bought a car. I had to pay both for the rent of my apartment and the stay at BOQ.

**7. Theme VII: The credit requirements for graduation from NPS were not clear until after a period of one to three quarters.**

**a. Theme**

Some officers interviewed reported that they lacked the correct or exact information on credit requirements. Some of the officers stated that, with incorrect and incomplete information, they've made wrong course choices that might make them fall short of credit requirements for graduation.

***b. Justification***

Without exact information on credit requirements, including undergraduate prerequisites, and graduate level courses, it is complicated for international students to design a schedule and complete the degree requirements. Another concern for international students are the IT 1500-Information Program Seminar for International Officers and IT 1600 –Communication Skills for International Officers, which are counted neither as undergraduate prerequisites nor graduate level courses.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (08) said:

My program lasts for six quarters. Until after the end of the second quarter, I didn't know about the credit requirements. After learning from a former graduate who fell short of 80 credit hours, I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to complete 36 hours of fundamentals and 48 hours of graduate-level courses, because I didn't know which class goes to which group. Moreover, I got IT 1500 and IT 1600 as my fourth class in the first quarter and fifth class in the second quarter, respectively. I didn't know they weren't counted in the fundamentals and graduate level course categories. In order to complete the 80-hour requirement, I took five classes in my fourth quarter.

**8. Theme VIII: Dependents' uncovered expenses are a big burden for married officers.**

***a. Theme***

All Turkish officers at NPS get the same salary, regardless of their marital status and rank. Married officers are responsible for their dependents' expenses in addition to their own. The result is an extra burden on married officers.

***b. Justification***

All married officers reported that their dependents' health insurance costs and airfares are not only a big financial burden, but also a time-consuming activity.

An Army First Lieutenant (20) stated:

We [married officers] are not provided with the same compensation as in Turkey. For example, neither my dependent's airfares nor health insurance costs are covered by our government. These issues bring financial burden and are time-consuming. Our main objective here at NPS is to concentrate on and complete the postgraduate education successfully. But these problems erode our motivation, take our time, and distract us from our classes.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (05) stated:

My spouse's health insurance costs were defrayed by the government in Turkey. But the same benefit is not given here in USA. Health insurance in the USA is much more costly than it is in Turkey, brings a considerable burden on married officers, and also time-consuming. This problem sometimes disrupts my concentration on classes.

**9. Theme IX: NPS offers more than just postgraduate education.**

***a. Theme***

What makes NPS different, even though some of the programs could be offered in Turkey, is that it introduces a new perspective and provides Turkish officers with a new vision.

***b. Justification***

One of the TAF's main objectives in sending its officers to the NPS is to improve its human capital. All Turkish officers reported that they gained a precious worldview and considered their stay in the U.S. a very good learning experience. Four major attributes of the postgraduate education at NPS have emerged from the interviews. The attributes are the quality of the postgraduate education, the English education for spouses, the orientation trips offered by the International Programs Office, and working with US students.

Eighteen out of 20 Turkish officers interviewed mentioned the quality of postgraduate education as an important aspect of NPS. Aspects of quality included access to a wide source of research and state-of-the-art decision support systems.



An Army First Lieutenant (07) stated:

I am all for the continuation of sending officers to NPS for postgraduate education, even though the same or even better postgraduate education might be received in Turkey. Because the quality of education at NPS is high. There are vast sources for research and access to these sources is fast and unlimited. Instructors do the classes by discussion of case studies. The subject matters for case studies are today's big corporations and organizations. Moreover, state-of-the-art decision support systems are used for quantitative analyses.

All married officers (eight) interviewed mentioned free English education for their spouses as an important benefit.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (05) stated:

An important benefit that goes unnoticed is the free English education for the spouses. Learning a language from its native speakers and in a native environment is much more effective than learning elsewhere. This benefit is important for the spouses' careers in Turkey, because knowing a foreign language is an advantage for career opportunities.

All Turkish officers (20) interviewed mentioned the orientation trips by the International Programs Office as a significant benefit of the postgraduate education experience.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (04) stated:

Orientation trips offered by International Programs Office are extremely significant and beneficial for international officers. These trips are well organized and the time is spent effectively to see many world famous places. The most astonishing trip I took was the Washington DC one. If it hadn't been for the International Programs Office, I would have never been able to take the same trip alone by myself.

All (20) Turkish officers interviewed mentioned the professionalism of the United States Armed Forces, time-management of US officers, respect for the privacy of the individuals, and self-improvement opportunities as the most significant benefits of the postgraduate education experience at NPS.

An Army First Lieutenant (01) stated:

I had a good chance of making a comparison between the U.S. and our armed forces while working with US students and observing the US military system. The most striking feature of the US students is their professionalism, which we ought to adopt. Second, time is an important

asset for them. They study during the weekdays and take trips on the weekends. Everybody listens to and discusses everybody's arguments irrespective of rank, race and educational background. Third, privacy is of utmost importance at NPS. For instance, the instructors give test results to the students separately. I consider this an indication of maturity and respect. As to the system, there isn't any red tape problem and I get immediate responses for any request. Finally and most importantly, I've achieved a sense of self-actualization, self-esteem and self-confidence at NPS.

**10. Theme X: IT 1500 and IT 1600 should not be mandatory.**

**a. Theme**

IT 1500 covers topics related to the American Life and Institutions and IT 1600 contains topics related to the Communication Skills for International Students. If IT 1500 and IT 1600 are taken as the fourth class in different quarters, an international officer falls short of the graduation requirement, which is 80 credit hours for Systems Management Department. for instance. If, on the other hand, these classes are taken as fifth classes, they put too much time pressure on the officers.

**b. Justification**

Out of 20 officers interviewed, only two officers thought that IT 1500 should be kept as it is, and all the officers interviewed thought that IT 1600 is not of much benefit to them.

An Army First Lieutenant (01) stated:

IT 1500 is a useful class. It not only warms us to the American system but also offers trips to places that we may not be able to go on our own. For example, municipalities, courthouses, etc. IT 1600, on the other hand, is taken by those officers who fail to pass the validation test. My argument is that we are required to make 540 or over in TOEFL test and in addition to taking the TOEFL test, we take this course. I can't say I got much benefit out of this class because my curriculum is a technical one. As a result, I lost one space for a 3000 or 4000 class.

A Navy Lieutenant Junior Grade (09) said:

I think there shouldn't be any IT 1500 class because I didn't learn anything. I actually learned more by myself than what is supposed to be taught in this class. In my opinion, this is just a loss of time. I am also against the IT 1600 class. Our education is not free, and I am supposed to take other classes (3000 and 4000 classes) that are related to my

program. I am also supposed to complete 80 hours of fundamentals and graduate-level courses in my department. Since these classes are not considered either of the two, I took IT 1600 as my fifth class in the second quarter and six classes in my fourth quarter, which really put too much time pressure on me.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **A. SUMMARY**

The researcher conducted 20 in-depth interviews with a sample of 20 Turkish Army and Navy officers at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) to examine the experiences of Turkish officers before and during postgraduate education at NPS.

The interview process revealed ten critical themes, along with supporting justifications. These themes emerged throughout the entire process of postgraduate education at NPS: starting with the receipt of information about postgraduate education at NPS from the Department of Army (DOA) and the Department of Navy (DON), then moving through the application process, the TOEFL test, subspecialty program selection, the orientation program at DOA and DON, completion of administrative procedures before arrival at NPS, and the NPS experience.

All of the Turkish officers interviewed value the opportunity to study at NPS highly and view this as an important milestone in their careers. However, certain areas of the postgraduate education process need to be improved and modified for Turkish officers. Both the first phase of the NPS experience—which occurs in Turkey—and the second phase—the educational experience at NPS—presented problems for many Turkish officers.

#### **1. Phase One**

The first phase of the postgraduate education process starts in Turkey. The study indicated that several aspects of this phase cause concern among potential applicants. Some examples are the general lack of information about postgraduate education at NPS, the late issue of the notification order, the inability to choose one's own subspecialty

program, the inadequate orientation program at DOA and DON, and, finally, the insufficient time allowed for completing administrative procedures before coming to NPS.

## **2. Phase Two**

The second phase of the postgraduate education process covers the educational experience at NPS. The research indicated that studying at NPS is an important opportunity for Turkish officers. However, certain difficulties exist for Turkish officers: insufficient time to adapt to NPS and the USA; the lack of exact information about the credit requirements for graduation; the mandatory status of IT 1500 and IT 1600; and the financial problems of married officers.

## **B. CONCLUSIONS**

The entire process of postgraduate education at NPS, both in Turkey and in the United States, is a challenge for Turkish officers. However, the ultimate results make the challenge worthwhile. In addition to the education they gain, the officers achieve a sense of self-actualization, self-esteem, and self-confidence. The end result of postgraduate education at NPS for the Turkish Armed Forces (TAF) is highly skilled officers who can provide crucial services and insights for TAF.

Most importantly, being at NPS is more than just postgraduate education for Turkish officers. Even though some of the programs could be offered in Turkey, being at NPS and in the USA introduces Turkish officers to a new worldview and a new vision. The chance to compare the Turkish Armed Forces with the United States Armed Forces, orientation trips, and the availability of state-of-the-art technology are just a few of the many benefits that NPS provides its students.

Finally, the Turkish officers view their education at NPS as an important milestone in their careers. Further research should be done on the process of providing Turkish officers postgraduate education at NPS to realize the maximum benefit for the TAF.

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the research in this thesis, the following recommendations can be made:

- The DOA and DON should systematically inform Turkish officers about the opportunity to study at NPS beginning in their military high school years. This information should attract universal competition among all officers.
- The DOA should issue notification orders about postgraduate education at NPS one year prior to taking the TOEFL test so that the applicants can take as many TOEFL tests as they wish. Doing so would prevent the late arrival of notification orders.
- The DOA should allow selected officers to choose their subspecialty programs. Both DOA and DON should state exactly what criteria they use to determine the subspecialty programs of the selected officers so that future applicants can take these criteria into consideration to get the subspecialty programs they want.
- The DOA should enhance the orientation program that Army officers go through before coming to NPS. While it may be prudent for the DOA to assign some officers to their subspecialty programs at NPS, the DOA should provide them with complete information about the requirements of their programs. This way, the officers can work more efficiently and in a directed way established by the DOA. Moreover, DOA should inform selected officers about ongoing projects so that they can incorporate these projects into their theses.

- Both the DOA and DON should extend the time frame allowed for the completion of administrative procedures before coming to NPS so that officers can complete them on time. In addition, the one-week adaptation period at NPS should be extended to at least two weeks. This would give the officers more time to adjust to the social, cultural and educational environment at NPS and in the USA.
- Each department at NPS should give international students exact information about the credit requirements for graduation before the start of these students' first quarters. All international students should understand how many credits are needed to complete a program, including prerequisites and graduate level courses they must take to graduate from NPS.
- The IT 1500 and IT 1600 courses should not be mandatory for all international students. Instead of IT 1600, NPS might establish a "Thesis Consultation Center" where international students can consult professionals about problems related to their theses. IT 1500 should be an optional two-hour class so that international students can take an additional class to complete the credit requirements.

## APPENDIX A

### DISTRIBUTION OF TURKISH OFFICERS AT NPS BY CURRICULUM FEBRUARY 1999

CURRICULUM	CURRICULUM #	TURKISH ARMY		TURKISH NAVY		TOTAL
		Single	Married	Single	Married	
MARITAL STATUS						
Aeronautics	610	1	1	0	0	2
Combat Systems	533	3	1	0	0	4
Computer Science	368	2	2	8	3	15
Modeling Virtual Environments & Simulation	399	2	0	0	0	2
Electronic Systems Engineering	590	1	2	3	3	9
National Security Affairs	684 - 681	3	0	0	0	3
Mechanical Engineering	570	0	0	2	1	3
Operations Analysis	360	4	3	2	2	11
Information Technology Management	370	3	0	2	1	6
Acquisition and Contracting Management	815	1	0	1	0	2
Defense Systems Management	818	2	0	0	0	2
Resource Planning and Management for International Defense	820	1	0	0	0	1
Material Logistics Support Management	827	0	0	1	1	2
Financial Management	837	1	1	0	0	2
Manpower Systems Analysis	847	1	1	1	0	3
Undersea Warfare International	526	0	0	0	1	1
Electronic Warfare Systems International	596	1	1	1	0	3
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>71</b>

### TURKISH OFFICERS INTERVIEWED

CURRICULUM	CURRICULUM #	TURKISH ARMY		TURKISH NAVY		TOTAL
		Single	Married	Single	Married	
MARITAL STATUS						
Aeronautics	610					0
Combat Systems	533	1				1
Computer Science	368	1		2		3
Modeling Virtual Environments & Simulation	399					0
Electronic Systems Engineering	590	1	1	1		3
National Security Affairs	684 - 681	1				1
Mechanical Engineering	570					0
Operations Analysis	360		1	1		2
Information Technology Management	370	2		1	1	4
Acquisition and Contracting Management	815			1		1
Defense Systems Management	818					0
Resource Planning and Management for International Defense	820					0
Material Logistics Support Management	827			1	1	2
Financial Management	837		1			1
Manpower Systems Analysis	847		1	1		2
Undersea Warfare International	526					0
Electronic Warfare Systems International	596					0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>





## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

1. How did you first find out about postgraduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School, at the Turkish Army Academy, at the Turkish Naval Academy, or during active duty years?
2. Tell me about your experiences during the application period to the Naval Postgraduate School.
3. Tell me about your perceptions of the curriculum subspecialty program selection by the DOA or DON. Tell me about changes, if any, you believe should be made to improve the selection process.
4. Tell me about your experiences in the orientation program during the transition period, after the selection process, and before coming to the Naval Postgraduate School. What went smoothly, and what went wrong? Please cite examples.
5. Tell me about your experiences during the completion of the administrative procedures prior to coming to the Naval Postgraduate School. What went smoothly, and what went wrong? Please cite examples.
6. Tell me about your academic and social experiences at the Naval Postgraduate School. What went smoothly, and what went wrong? Please cite examples.
7. Do you have any final comments on any procedures that you believe the Turkish Army or Navy ought to adopt to make postgraduate education at the Naval Postgraduate School a better experience for Turkish officers?



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